



GIRLS INCORPORATED® OF LIMESTONE, ALGONQUIN AND LAKESHORE
31 Weller Avenue, Kingston, Ontario K7K 2T1
Phone: (613) 542-9202 Fax: (613) 547-9091
Web: www.girlsinclimestone.ca

Agency Overview

MISSION: Inspiring all girls to be strong, smart and bold!

Girls Inc. Limestone provides life-skills education and mentoring programs for girls, and is at the heart of girls' lives and the forefront of the girls' rights movement. With programs that are grounded in research and tested in the field, our organization celebrates and empowers girls and young women, and advocates for an equitable world.

The compelling voices and perspectives of girls and women are woven throughout our work, which includes engaging programs, original research that highlights underlying causes and effective solutions for girls' issues, and persuasive advocacy at both local and national levels.

Founded in 1972 to provide services for girls in Kingston, we now provide comprehensive programming for more than 1,100 girls and young women each year, and additional 300 girls and young women through individual and information support. We are dedicated to providing quality life-education services to girls in our community because:

- Eating disorders are the third most common chronic illness in adolescent girls – 30% of girls are likely to engage in severely disordered food and weight behaviours.
- Bullying, relational aggression and the constant bombardment of media and societal messages about how girls should look and behave are key contributors to widespread low self-esteem among girls.
- More than 6,000 girls and young women in our service district are likely to experience sexual abuse in their lifetime. 10% of sexual assaults are reported to the police.
- 27% of Ontario girls in grades 9 to 11 have been pressured to do something sexual that they do not want to do.
- 46% of high school girls in Ontario are the target of unwanted sexual comments or gestures.
- 1 out of 3 Ontario girls in grades 6 to 10 report feeling depressed each week.
- 1 out of 7 Ontario teen girls believes she "does not have much to be proud of" and that she "can't do anything right".
- 10 times more women than men are affected by eating disorders.

- 90% of girls have reported that the fashion industry and media makes them experience pressure to be thin.
- Only 4% of girls (compared with 9% of boys) achieve the recommended levels of daily physical activity.
- Over 85% of Canadian girls 15-24 drink more than the recommended Canadian guidelines.
- 2 out of 3 minimum wage workers are women.
- In Canada, women who drop out before completing Grade 9 make only \$20,800, which is 50% less than their male counterparts at \$40,400.
- A study in 2006 found that only 10.2% of female students, as compared to 21.6% of male students, chose science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) careers.
- Only 4% of CEOs in Canada's Top 500 companies are women.

Agency Objectives

We are dedicated to helping girls and young women realize their full potential. Research and experience show that in a pro-girl, all-girl setting, equity is more common, girls are encouraged to take positive risks and are more confident in doing so, girls interact more with female participants and role models, and the unique needs and interests of girls are the focus. Our agency objectives are as follows:

- To provide services for girls and young women within a holistic framework.
- To provide distinct services tailored specifically for girls, young women, and their families in a safe and non-threatening environment.
- To provide group educational programs and support services for girls, young women, and their families.
- To provide mentoring programs for girls and young women with complex needs, who require intensive, long-term individual support that is not provided through our group programs.
- To provide individual client and family support, as well as referrals and co-operation with other service providers in the community.
- To adequately address the needs of extremely high-needs young women, including the areas of employment and housing.
- To expand our education program to include a greater number of prevention-based workshop series for girls and young women.

- To increase group education activities so that we are reaching a significantly higher number of girls and young women within our district of service.
- To effectively serve girls and young women residing in all areas of our district of service.

Girls Inc. Limestone Programs

Girls Inc. inspires all girls to be strong, smart, and bold through life-changing programs and experiences that help girls navigate gender, economic, and social barriers. Research-based curricula, delivered by trained, mentoring professionals in a positive all-girl environment equip girls to achieve academically, lead healthy and physically active lives, manage money, navigate media messages, and discover an interest in science, technology, engineering, and math.

Our programs provide critical support for all girls – girls who need intensive, ongoing support, girls whose needs are best met through participation in a topic-specific workshop series, and girls who benefit from receiving ongoing girl-specific information and occasional support.

Girls Ed Programs

Girls Ed programs are designed for adolescent and teen girls and delivered in group program rounds. Our ongoing programs are:

School Groups: Throughout the school year, we continuously deliver school groups for girls on a wide variety of topics, from bullying and relational aggression, to self-esteem and body image, to peer pressure and healthy relationships, and personal and internet safety.

Community Groups: Girls Inc. delivers ongoing special program rounds in community centers and for partner organizations. We are often asked to support a specific group of girls through the provision of program rounds on personal safety and self defence, media literacy, and relational aggression.

Summer Day Camp: Each summer, we deliver at least four weeks of Girls Inc. summer day camp where girls are inspired to step outside their comfort zone to participate in fun physical activities, hands-on science projects, and other activities that are not so traditional for summer camp.

After School Program

Girls Inc. delivers a comprehensive and fun healthy lifestyle program for girls Monday to Thursday from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. on school days. The program is delivered at a local community center in an identified disadvantaged community in Kingston, Ontario. Each evening includes a safe walking group for transportation to and from the center, a healthy snack prepared together, and terrific activities and education workshops designed just for girls. All neighbourhood girls in grades 1 through 8 are welcome.

Girls Inc. Smart Start Program

Formerly our "FOCUS" Program, Girls Inc. Smart Start is a 22-week, intensive employment readiness program for young women. The program is designed to assist young women with complex needs overcome barriers to education and employment, and work towards career success and financial independence.

Member Support & Special Programs

The provision of individual and family support has always set our agency apart in terms of client care. Agency staff work closely with the families of program participants to ensure needs are met in a holistic manner through our agency programs, available community services, or individual support.

In addition to our core programs above, Girls Inc. continually seeks out funding opportunities to support the advancement, education, economic and social status of girls and women in our community.

National Identity Programs

ECONOMIC LITERACY

Girls learn to manage money, invest, and begin to develop an appreciation for global economics. Girls as young as six explore how the economy affects us locally and globally and develop skills needed to be economically independent.

FRIENDLY PEERSUASION

Girls develop skills to resist pressure to use harmful substances such as alcohol, tobacco, household chemicals, and other drugs.

LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY ACTION

Girls build their leadership skills and create lasting social change through community action projects. This program celebrates the heritage of girls and women as leaders and the development of awareness of themselves as community resources and trustees of the common good.

MEDIA LITERACY

Girls increase their awareness of the scope and power of the media and the effects of media messages on girls and women. In this program they learn to analyze critically what they see and hear in the media, advocate for change in entertainment, news, and advertising media.

OPERATION SMART

Girls develop enthusiasm for and skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Through hands-on activities, girls explore, ask questions, and solve problems.

PREVENTING ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY

Girls acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to take charge of and to make informed, thoughtful decisions about their sexual health.

PROJECT BOLD

Girls learn to lead safer lives by developing skills and strategies for self-defence, including physical techniques.

SPORTING CHANCE

Girls learn to appreciate an active lifestyle as they develop movement and athletic skills, cooperative and competitive spirit, and health.

ALLIES IN ACTION

The Allies in Action curriculum empowers girls to acknowledge girl-on-girl violence as hurtful, analyze the contexts that shape these behaviors, and learn skills for navigating conflicts. Owning our individual behaviours and their impact on others is a critical step to self-awareness. We cover such topics as exclusion, put-downs, name calling, and most important, how to communicate effectively with your peers.

NETSMARTZ

The internet is used for many positive activities; however, girls also face some serious risks, such as online predators, cyber bullying, and consequences from revealing too much personal information. Girls may encounter these risks during common online activities like school work, chatting with friends, or updating their social networking pages.

HEALTHY MIND+BODY

A program designed to help ensure that girls have the support that they need to take charge of their own health. Mind+BodySM focuses on four pillars that, according to research, play a major role in fortifying girls' ability to develop and sustain strong minds and strong bodies. They are: nutrition, physical activity, stress management, and body image.